

Vina McDermott
HB 5537

To whom it may concern:

It has come to my attention that a bill has been raised (HB 5537 section 42 [6]) before the Department of Public Health that would expand the scope of practice of Speech and Language Pathologists (SLP's) to include provision of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) within Connecticut.

ABA is not currently within the scope of practice of Speech Language Pathologists. The scope of practice of Speech and Language Pathologists in the State of Connecticut, as written in the Department of Public Health, Chapter 399, Section, 20-408, includes:

"The practice of speech and language pathology" means the application of principles, methods and procedures for the measurement, testing, diagnosis, prediction, counseling or instruction relating to the development and disorders of speech, voice or language or feeding and swallowing or other upper aerodigestive functions for the purpose of diagnosing, preventing, treating, ameliorating or modifying such disorders and conditions in individuals or groups of individuals, and includes screening individuals for hearing loss or middle ear pathology using otoacoustic emissions screening, screening tympanometry or conventional pure-tone air conduction methods, including otoscopic inspection."

Behavior Analysis and the scope of practice of Behavior Analysts has been defined in existing Connecticut legislation, Public Act No. 09-115:

"Applied behavior analysis" means the design, implementation and evaluation of environmental modifications, using behavioral stimuli and consequences, including the use of direct observation, measurement and functional analysis of the relationship between environment and behavior, to produce socially significant improvement in human behavior.

Speech Language Pathologists are NOT REQUIRED to take any classes in behavior analysis, nor do they have any training or experience requirements related to the provision of behavior analytic services as part of their training to become SLP's. Due to this fact, consumers of Applied Behavior Analysis services would be negatively impacted by this modification to an SLP's scope of practice.

Behavior analysis and the scope of practice of Behavior Analysts have been defined in existing CT legislation, and this expansion of an SLP's scope of practice would negatively impact other professionals including Board Certified Behavior Analysts and School Psychologists.

Behavior analysts go through a rigorous study of the science of behavior and applied behavior analysis, intensive practicum/field experience, and an examination that SLP's have not completed in their training.

I urge you to vote NO and not allow this Bill to pass.

Thank you very much,

Vina McDermott, MS, BCBA
Board Certified Behavior Analyst